Royal United Hospital Bath NHS
NHS Trust

RUH The use of outcome data monitoring in the quality assurance of MI services

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Introduction

- In recent years, the effects of Medicines Information (MI) services on patient outcome have become a focus for research.
- Positive effects of an MI enquiry answering service for healthcare professionals (HCPs) have been demonstrated (1) & small scale projects have found similar benefits for patient helplines (2).
- If patient outcome data could be collected continuously through routine MI quality assurance programmes, they might provide a powerful tool for monitoring the quality & value of an individual MI service.

Healthcare Professional Enquiries

- Two key patient outcome questions (with rating scales) for HCP enquiries were validated in a recent national study (1):

How did the advice from MI affect your patient's care or outcome?
How did the advice from MI affect the safety of your patient's drug therapy?

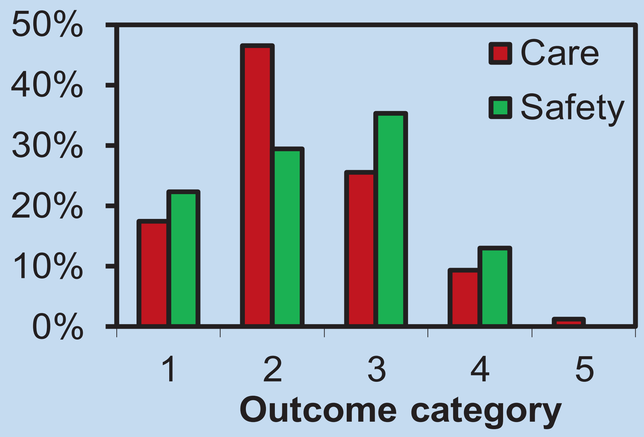
- These questions were added to the standard national user survey. In other regards, the survey remained unchanged.

78% → **68%**

Response rate before & after adding outcome questions

61% Proportion of respondents who answered outcome questions

86 Responses to outcome questions received over the first 2.5 years



Outcome categories

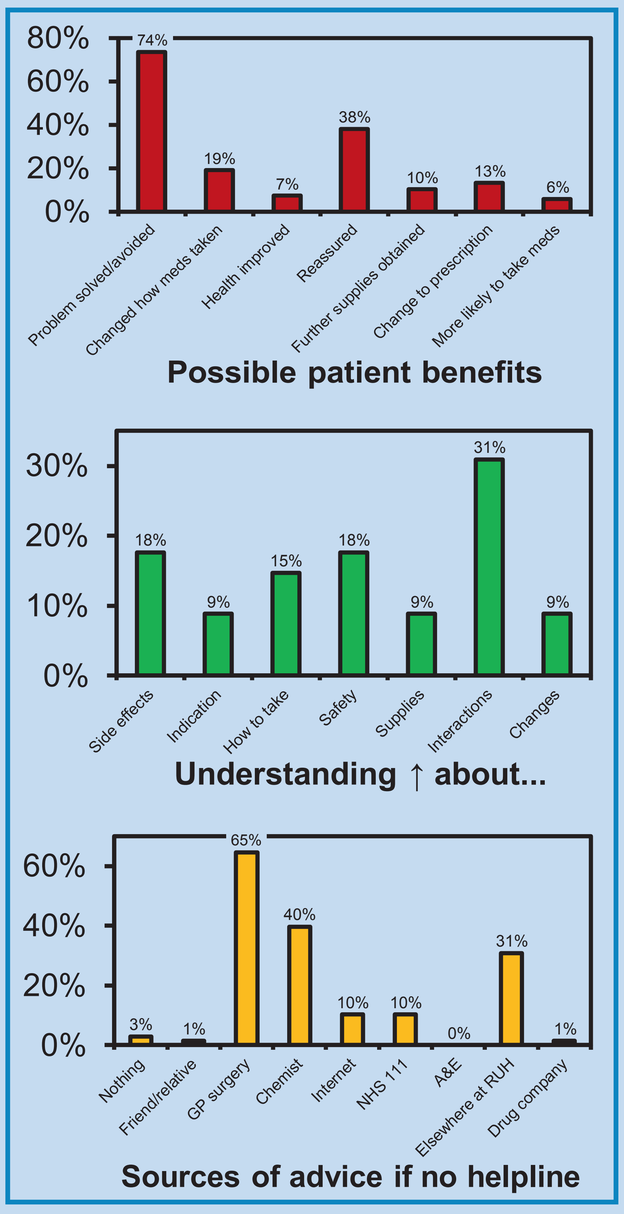
1 ↑ Increasingly beneficial effects
2
3
4 No effect
5 Detrimental effect

Enquirers' assessment of the overall impact of MI advice on patient care & safety. These figures are comparable with data from the original national study (1).

Patient Helpline

- No validated tool to measure patient outcomes
- A simple survey was devised & distributed by post

49% response rate → **29%** of callers providing feedback over 18 months



100%
of respondents stated that they found the advice they received helpful & that they followed it

98%
of respondents stated that calling the helpline improved their experience of the hospital

19%
Proportion of calls during which a medication error was identified & corrected

Discussion

- Questions regarding patient outcome can be included in regular MI user surveys whilst still achieving good response rates.
- The data obtained can be used to ensure the MI centre in question is working to a high standard & to demonstrate the patient value obtained from the provision of the service.
- HCP enquiry outcome questions are already validated & could be quickly incorporated into the national MI user survey.
- Further work is required to validate patient helpline outcome questions. This should be a high priority for future research.

References

1. Innes, Bramley & Wills, 2014. The impact of UK Medicines Information services on patient care, clinical outcomes & medicines safety: an evaluation of healthcare professionals' opinions. Eur J Hosp Pharm, **21**, pp. 222-228.
2. Wills, 2014. Who do discharged patients call if they have medication queries? Clin Pharm, **6**, pp. 103-104.